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Indicators of Ontario Tobacco Strategy Progress 2004-2005: Highlights

The upcoming report in the 2004-2005 Monitoring and Evaluation Series uses quantitative data to examine progress in Strategy goals of prevention, cessation, and protection. This report is one in a three-part series, which also includes an environmental scan of program and policy initiatives in and beyond Ontario, and a discussion of implications of findings.

Following are selected highlights from the report:

PREVENTION

- **Prevalence of Student Smoking**
 - In 2005, the prevalence of current smoking in the past 30 days ranged from <1% to 13% among grade 7 and grade 12 students, respectively.
 - Daily smoking among Ontario students has declined steadily since 1999.
 - From 2003 to 2005, the percentage of Ontario students who had never taken a puff of a cigarette in their lifetime increased significantly from 57% to 67%.
- **Tobacco Control Initiatives**
 - In fiscal year 2004-2005, all 34 (out of 36) Ontario public health units that responded to a province-wide survey had provided tobacco use prevention material to schools.
 - 28 out of 34 had worked with school groups regarding enforcement of the *Tobacco Control Act*.
 - 24 gave presentations to schools about tobacco use prevention.
- **Youth Access**
 - In 2004, 16% of Ontario retailers were willing to sell cigarettes to underage youth aged 15 to 17.
 - Gas stations had the highest rate (20%) of sales to underage youth.
 - In 2005, the majority of Ontario students who smoked obtained their cigarettes from someone else.

CESSATION

- **Current Smoking**
 - In 2004, the prevalence of smoking among Ontario adults was 21%.
 - There was a higher prevalence of smoking among men (25%) than among women (18%).
 - Other demographic characteristics associated with a higher prevalence of smoking were being under the age of 60, having less than high school education, living in the northern region of the province, and working in traditional trades or farming.
- **Daily Smoking**
 - In 2004, 17% of Ontario adults were daily smokers, consuming on average 15 cigarettes per day.
 - Of current smokers, 77% were daily smokers.
- **Quitting Smoking**
 - In 2004, 57% of current smokers in Ontario intended to quit within 6 months of their interview.
 - 27% of current smokers intended to quit within 30 days.
 - Of all current and former smokers who tried to quit in the past two years, 30% used the nicotine patch.

PROTECTION

- **Secondhand Smoke in Restaurants and Bars**
 - In 2003, 18% of Ontarians aged 12 and over reported past month exposure to secondhand smoke every day or almost every day in public places, such as bars, restaurants and shopping malls.
 - Public support for complete bans in restaurants and bars has steadily increased from 1998 (24% and 10%, respectively) to 2004 (57% and 34%, respectively).
- **Secondhand Smoke at Work**
 - In 2004, 21% of nonsmoking workers reported some workplace exposure.
 - 88% of workers were covered by total smoking bans in the workplace.
 - A higher proportion of male than female workers and trade/farm workers than professional/managerial workers reported exposure at work.
- **Secondhand Smoke in Homes and Cars**
 - In 2004, family members or visitors smoked inside 14% of Ontario households and inside 11% of households with children aged 0-14.
 - 1 in 3 nonsmoking students reported being exposed to secondhand smoke inside their homes every day or almost every day.
 - In 2003, 10% of Ontarians aged 12 and over reported past month exposure to secondhand smoke in cars.

A discussion of these results and implications of the findings will be released as the third report in this series in the spring. Each report is posted at <http://www.otru.org> as it becomes available. Upon completion of all three reports, a printed volume will be distributed to our network.

To provide comments or receive more information, please contact Lise Anglin, Ontario Tobacco Research Unit, at lise_anglin@camh.net.

DATA SOURCES

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